

State Technical Committee Meeting

Holiday Inn Denver West Village – Colorado Room –
Golden, Colorado
Wednesday, March 8, 2006

Allen Green, State Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), called the meeting to order asking those in attendance to identify who they are and who they are representing. He indicated that discussions today would cover a wide range of subjects and time for questions, comments and concerns from the participants will be allowed. He stated that NRCS looks to the State Technical Committee for their input.

Allen introduced Sarah Braasch, Region Director to the Chief in the West Region of NRCS, Washington, DC, who is in attendance at our meeting today.

Allen introduced **Tim Davis**, Private Lands Coordinator, Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) for a report on the **High Plains Aquifer and Republican Areas Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)** implementation update. Tim reported that Colorado's Republican River Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) aims to enhance multiple natural resource concerns in eastern Colorado's Republican River Basin through retirement of up to 35,000 acres of environmentally sensitive cropland in Kit Carson, Logan, Yuma, Phillips and Sedgwick counties. Landowners who voluntarily take irrigated cropland out of agricultural production and permanently retire water rights associated with that cropland will receive financial incentives, cost-share incentives and technical assistance for establishing long-term, resource-conserving covers.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Republican River Water Conservation District (RRWCD) Water Activity Enterprise provide these incentives. The Republican River CREP provides an inflow of approximately four federal dollars for every local dollar invested to improve water quantity, water quality, soil erosion and wildlife habitat concerns on approximately 30,000 irrigated acres and up to 5,000 dryland pivot corner acres associated with enrolled pivot corners. Voluntarily participating landowners benefit by retiring marginal lands and establishing conservation practices. Agriculture producers and other residents throughout the basin benefit through several means including reduced aquifer depletion, chemical application and soil erosion; improved drinking water supplies; and increased streamflow and recreational uses.

The RRWCD Water Activity Enterprise has appropriated \$11.7 million of the project's total \$66.3 million. Those funds are raised primarily through the assessment of fees on irrigators and commercial/municipal well users in the basin. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will provide \$52.8 million and the balance shall be contributed in the form of state and local in-kind services.

Basin irrigators can learn more about the Republican River CREP from their local FSA offices or from the RRWCD office in Wray. Continuous sign up for the Republican River CREP is expected to take place beginning in June of 2006.

High Plains CREP Overview

Colorado's High Plains Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) seeks to enhance habitat for pheasants and other ground nesting birds and reduce soil erosion in eastern Colorado through the voluntary retirement of 30,000 acres in small (~40 acre) parcels of cropland in Kit Carson, Yuma, Logan, Phillips, and Sedgwick counties. Landowners who voluntarily retire these small parcels adjacent to cropland that are farmed using a Delayed Minimum Tillage (DMT) cropping system will receive financial incentives, cost-share incentives and technical assistance for establishing long-term, resource-conserving covers.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Colorado Division of Wildlife will provide these incentives. The High Plains CREP provides an inflow of approximately four federal dollars for every local dollar invested to improve wildlife habitat, water quality, and soil erosion concerns on approximately 30,000 acres. Voluntarily participating landowners benefit by retiring marginal lands and establishing conservation practices. Agriculture producers and other residents benefit through several means including improved wildlife habitat and recreational access, a reduction in chemical application and soil erosion, and a reduction in energy demands.

The Colorado Division of Wildlife will provide approximately \$3.7 million of the project's total \$25 million. The Farm Service Agency (FSA) will provide approximately \$20 million and the balance shall be contributed in the form of state and local in-kind services.

Producers in the region can learn more about the High Plains CREP from their local FSA offices or from the Colorado Division of Wildlife offices in Sterling. Continuous sign up for the High Plains CREP is expected to take place beginning in June of 2006.

Status of the CREP Proposals - proposals have received tentative approval from FSA and State- Federal Agreements have been submitted and are under review. The Colorado CREP Policy Handbook Amendment is currently being developed and details regarding the sign-up procedures, Colorado CREP signing ceremony and sign-up announcement are also in progress. A Programmatic Environmental Assessment (PEA) addressing both CREP projects has been prepared and is currently located on the Federal Register. The PEA is available for public comment at the Sterling and Burlington Public libraries or online at [Geo-Marine – cultural and natural resources, energy services, NEPA, environmental engineering](#) and <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/epb/assessments.htm> .

Public comments will be received on the PEA until to April 14, 2006. Address comments to: Colorado CREP Comments, Rick Cervenka, 628 West 5th Street, Cortez, CO 81321.

Lynette DiFeo, Program Specialist/Conservation Specialist, Farm Service Agency (FSA), reported on the **Conservation Resource Program (CRP) Extension and Re-enrollment**. Irrigated Rental Rates that will be used for irrigated cropland for the Republican River CREP will be the same as Nebraska's irrigated rental rates (approximately \$115/acre for center pivot irrigation, and approximately \$105/acre for gravity irrigation systems)

REX – is Re-enrollments and Extensions for CRP contracts expiring 2007-2010. FSA county offices sent letters to CRP participants whose contracts expire September 30, 2007. In the letters, participants were notified of an offer made by FSA to either extend their contracts anywhere from two to five years or to re-enroll their land under a new 10-year contract. Determinations about whether participants were offered contract extensions or re-enrollments

was based on the Environmental Benefits Index (EBI) score that was used to rank offers at the time of enrollment. Producers ranked in the highest 20 percent ranking score are being offered the opportunity to re-enroll into a new 10 year contract. Producers were offered contract extensions based on the following percentages:

- Greater than 20 percent to 40 percent are eligible for a five-year contract extension
- Greater than 40 percent to 60 percent are eligible for a four-year contract extension
- Greater than 60 percent to 80 percent are eligible for a three-year contract extension
- Greater than 80 percent to 100 percent are eligible for a two-year contract extension

CRP participants must notify FSA if they intend to accept the offer of extension/re-enrollment by April 14, 2006. Participants must accept the offer as provided, however, they can opt for a lesser amount of acres than are under contract now for extension/re-enrollment.

If participants accept the offer made by FSA, participants will pay a compliance review fee (flat fee of \$45 per contract plus \$1/acre not to exceed \$500/contract). FSA will begin to conduct compliance reviews after April 14, 2006. In order for FSA County Committees to approve a contract extension/re-enrollment, the participant's current contract(s) must be in compliance.

County FSA Committees must have all contract extension/re-enrollment approvals completed by September 30, 2006. The contract extension/re-enrollments will become effective September 30, 2007. All CRP participants with contracts expiring 2008-2010 will be getting a letter with their offer for extension/re-enrollment in the near future.

CRP General Signup 33 Announced

CRP general signup 33 will be held March 27-April 14, 2006. Producers may offer new land for enrollment into the CRP. Also participants whose contracts expire this fiscal year (September 30, 2006) may place an offer to attempt to re-enroll their land under current contract if their county has not reached their cropland limitation for CRP.

Cropland Limitation for CRP

Statutory regulations state that counties may enroll up to 25 percent of their cropland into the CRP. Three counties in Colorado (only three in the Nation) were recently approved for a waiver to enroll more than 25% of their cropland into CRP.

Those counties are:

County	Cropland Limitation Percentage
Crowley	30.57 percent
Kiowa	30 percent
Pueblo	28.5 percent

Requests for waiver of the 25 percent cropland limit were denied for Baca, Prowers, and Las Animas Counties. The supporting documentation was not sufficient to show that producers have been experiencing difficulties complying with their HELC plans. Statutory regulations require that for an approval to waive the 25 percent cropland limitation, the Secretary must determine both of the following:

1. the action would not adversely affect the local economy of the county, and
2. producers in the county are having difficulties complying with conservation plans

An electronic version of the Draft Environmental Assessment (PEA) for Proposed Implementation of Colorado's Republican River Basin and High Plains Region Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) Agreements are located on the following internet addresses:

<http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/epb/assessments/htm>

<http://www.geo-marine.com> (select "public documents")

Comments: Will participation levels decline because of the reduction in the rental rates?

Response: Not really, as we tried for a higher rental rate than we were told that would be approved. We have been guided to use the same rental rates as the State of Nebraska; the rates are only \$5-\$10 less than the rate we were asking for.

Comment: If you retire the irrigated land in this proposal, is there a provision to allow the lands to come back into production?

Response: Yes, two to three years, then they can use a perennial cover. Reviews will be performed after first and second years.

Comment: The caps are all under the CRP, CREP. We need to have the cap (on acres) increased.

Response: Leave out the CRP in initial Farm Bill.

Comment: It is like taking from one area and putting it in another; they need to separate the two.

Comment: What is the length of the contract and what will happen when they expire?

Response: The length of contracts is 15 years. Most contracts have not reached the 15-year mark, however, we feel most will re-enroll or probably go back to dryland farming because these are such small parcels.

Response: CREP is needed in the basin area, it is more critical to get water in CREP proposals; dryland would be a second choice. The rules regulate that counties were suppose to leave room for CRP programs.

Comment: in Washington County the Environmental EQIP is equally viable to the CREP. An option would be to use the EQIP Well Set-aside Program.

Comment: We have neighbors in the EQIP. There is a lot of competition for funding. We need to work together or we will lose all available funding.

Comment: There are five national priority areas. Colorado is not in these areas; however if the proposal is in the national priority area extra points are received.

Response: Most of the responses are for extension.

Comment: Do we have the staff in place for the inspections? What are the inspections looking for?

Response: At this time FSA does not have the staff needed for these inspections. The National FSA office is looking at this and we will be receiving help soon. The contracts cover 1.3 million acres that need to be reviewed. Presently, we are sending staff out to look for the "healthy stand", does the area look healthy, does it have good growth. These are some of the things we are looking for. This gives us a good idea of what is working and what is not working.

Comment: How can we help with the review process, how do we get the staff needed for these reviews?

Response: We will look to the National FSA office for their guidance.

Comment. NRCS, ECS, can work with FSA and assist with the training needed for FSA staff to perform these reviews.

Response: FSA appreciates this offer and will work closely with NRCS in getting staff trained.

Comment: If acres are out of the compliance, we can take the lesser acres in the REX. We have to pay the filing fee now; do we get these fees back if the proposal is rejected?

Response: The funds are not refundable if the review is performed.

Comment: CACD is supporting the CRP transitional concept. We need programs with incentives to get more involvement.

Comment: Our district has a concern with the direction of all programs for natural resource conservation. We feel we are losing sight of the family farm. We want see CRP fields moved back to production. We

need the family farm to continue what we have in America. The Counties, who lose their agriculture production, are the counties that are in trouble. We need to be sure that we keep America's lands in production. The family farmers have the best interest of the nation's natural resources. We need to keep the stewards on the land.

Response: It is important that we are effective in what we do. It is critical to target those efforts. We are asking for input from our partners, asking for their concerns and ideas. We are asking what can NRCS do internally to support these efforts?

Pat Davey, Plant Materials Specialist, NRCS, presented a strategic plan for 2006-2010 on the **Invasive Plant Species Efforts in Colorado**. He reported that this plan supports the National NRCS Strategic Plan by addressing the Mission Goals: Healthy Plant and Animal Communities. The goal of implementing this plan is to achieve the Forest and Range Outcome: A productive, diverse and resilient grassland, range and forest ecosystem. NRCS business lines, products and services identified in this plan include the following:

Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment

- A. Assist the Colorado Department of agriculture to complete weed inventories statewide for the A and B list.
 - 1. NRCS Field offices contact county weed supervisors and offer NRCS assistance to help complete weed mapping
 - 2. NRCS provides assistance to summarize weed maps at state level (GIS layer).
 - 3. Work with Colorado Department of Agriculture to develop a web based reporting system to report new findings of weed species on A and B list.
 - 4. Explore opportunity to create a shared employee position in field office, i.e. part-time Farm Bill technician and part-time weed technician.
- B. Rapid Watershed Assessment Tool
 - 1. Work with Department of Agriculture, USGS, and CSU to incorporate weed inventory maps in to rapid assessment.

Conservation Planning and Technical Consultation

- A. Determine amount and type of assistance NRCS is currently providing cooperators and partners
- B. Inventory Field office capabilities to provide technical consultation to cooperators, and provide training and tools where needed.
 - 1. Request county weed supervisors from local area to train NRCS employees
 - 2. Determine if NRCS Field offices need more Certified Crop Advisors to develop, review and approve conservation plans that contain Pest Management.
 - 3. Provide training to county weed supervisors on NRCS conservation planning process, Pest Management practice standard and Integrated Pest Management.
 - 4. Provide training to Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff to identify invasive/noxious weed species on Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands.
- C. Make weed inventory maps available to Field office through the electronic Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG), Section I
 - 1. Develop weed data layer for Toolkit
 - 2. Incorporate weed inventories as part of vegetative surveys or resource inventories during the conservation planning process.
 - 3. NRCS provide cooperators with CSU Service In-Action sheets for weed species located on landowners' property.
- D. Make Pest Management (595) a higher priority planned practice across the state
 - 1. Make Pest Management a part of all conservation plans, new and re-enrolled CRP fields.

Natural Resource Technology Transfer

- A. Improve communications between NRCS, Colorado Department of Agriculture and county weed supervisors.
 - 1. NRCS present at monthly/quarterly meetings of County Weed Boards and Colorado Weed Network.
 - 2. Encourage district board member(s) to be present at county weed meetings
 - 3. Work with USGS, Colorado Department of Agriculture and CSU to develop weed movement prediction tool.
 - 4. Create an Ex-Officio position on district boards for County Weed Managers
 - 5. Assign a certified Pest Management Specialist to each Field office.
- B. Outreach to Cooperators and local government
 - 1. Field Day and tours
 - 2. Weed Awareness Week
 - 3. Weed information insert in local newspaper
 - 4. Distribute weed identification booklets
 - 5. Job sheets for Pest Management
- C. NRCS Plant Materials Specialist will develop technical product reference packets to help develop Pest Management plans.
 - 1. Technical notes on the noxious weed law and the A, B, C species list.
 - 2. Distribute CSU Extension Pesticide Guide
 - 3. Review Pest Management standard and specification
 - 4. Distribute weed identification booklets
 - 5. Job sheets for Pest Management

Financial Assistance

- A. Cost-share programs to manage invasive plant species
 - 1. Special EQIP Issue – spring of 2006 – Call for Proposals (CFP) \$1,000,000
 - 2. EQIP Issue continues through fall 2010
 - 3. WHIP – encourage invasive plant species proposals
 - 4. CSP – increase enhancement payments for Pest Management
 - 5. WRP – provide financial assistance for invasive weed control
 - 6. CRP – work with FSA to develop a worksheet for farmers to self-certify weed control on CRP fields to receive the \$5/ac. Maintenance fee
 - 7. GLCI – fund proposals for invasive plant species management and control on grazinglands.
- B. Direct financial assistance to priority watersheds with designated invasive species areas.
 - 1. Determined from weed database
 - 2. Organized watershed partnerships

Cooperative Conservation

- A. Develop Integrated Pest Management strategies at watershed level
- B. Develop partnerships for cost-share for Pest Management
 - 1. CDOW-HPP
 - 2. Local county government
 - 3. Other agencies (USFS, BLM, CSFS, USF&WS), etc.

Working with partnerships

For a copy of the Colorado Noxious Weed list (A,B,C) contact Pat Davey at 720-544-2839 or email at patrick.davey@co.usda.gov).

Comments: In our planning sessions, we need to include the local County and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to get them involved and then we need to work together to solve the problems of invasive weeds and the eradication of these weeds. We are trying to get everyone involved that may be of assistance.

Comment: The State Land Board has a line item in their budget to help assist with the issue of invasive weeds. Please include us in your planning meetings.

Comment: We need to look at the risk assessment relationship during the inventories relative to weed invasions. We need to come up with a better strategic plan. We need to identify the invasions, addressing what is the situation involving the invasive weeds, how is the invasion happening.

Dennis Alexander next discussed the **Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) call for proposals dealing with invasive plant species**. Up to \$1,000,000 available in limited geographical area(s) for watershed scale projects. Targeting newly emerging weed species from “A” and “B” list. **Dennis indicated that not all species from the “A” and “B” list are eligible for funding, not all species will be included.** This is not a grant, individual contracts and producers. **Funding must be allocated to EQIP eligible producers through normal EQIP contracting procedures**

A call for proposals is being accepted from organizations, units of government, or other groups with ongoing weed management on invasive plant species initiatives. **Five copies of the proposal are due at the NRCS State office by COB on March 24, 2006. Project area will be selected by April 7, 2006.** Sign-up will be held as soon as projects are selected.

Response: the US Geological Survey has a prediction scale on invasive weeds available. Need to include this information in your planning sessions. We need to include training on invasive weeds in our Range Management training. Watersheds could use Integrated Weed Management to obtain funding.

Comment: will the funding be available after the first year?

Response: We will look at extensions and what would be appropriate for the next year. The area offices will be writing the proposals, NRCS will only provide assistance. They will not consult on the writing of the proposals. Need to look at the GLCI, Invasive Species for funding. April 7 is the deadline. Funding will be awarded to non-profit entities or groups, there if more opportunity for funding. \$50,000 to \$500,000 per grant. This is available to all the states; however, priority is being given to the 17 western states.

Eric Lane, State Weed Coordinator, Colorado Department of Agriculture, reported on the **Strategies and Coordination on the Invasive Plant Species in Colorado**.

Eric gave an overview of the program:

- Review Colorado’s strategic plan to stop the spread of noxious weeds
- Identify how Colorado’s Noxious Weed Act is being utilized to implement the strategic plan
- Identify a few ways in which NRCS may be well-positioned to support Colorado’s efforts

Colorado’s Strategic Plan:

- Adopted in 2001 and endorsed by 43 private and public organizations (including NRCS) as well as Governor Owens.
- Simplifies a complex situation to provide every landowner/stakeholder with clear expectations/opportunities.
- Facilitates cooperation/coordination to stop the spread of noxious weeds across Colorado’s public/private landscape.
- Promotes cost-effective efforts.

The vision: Productive agriculture and a healthy environment, unimpaired by noxious weeds that continue to provide Coloradans with an exceptional quality of life.

The mission: To stop the spread of noxious weed species in Colorado and restore degraded lands of exceptional agricultural and environmental value during the 21st century.

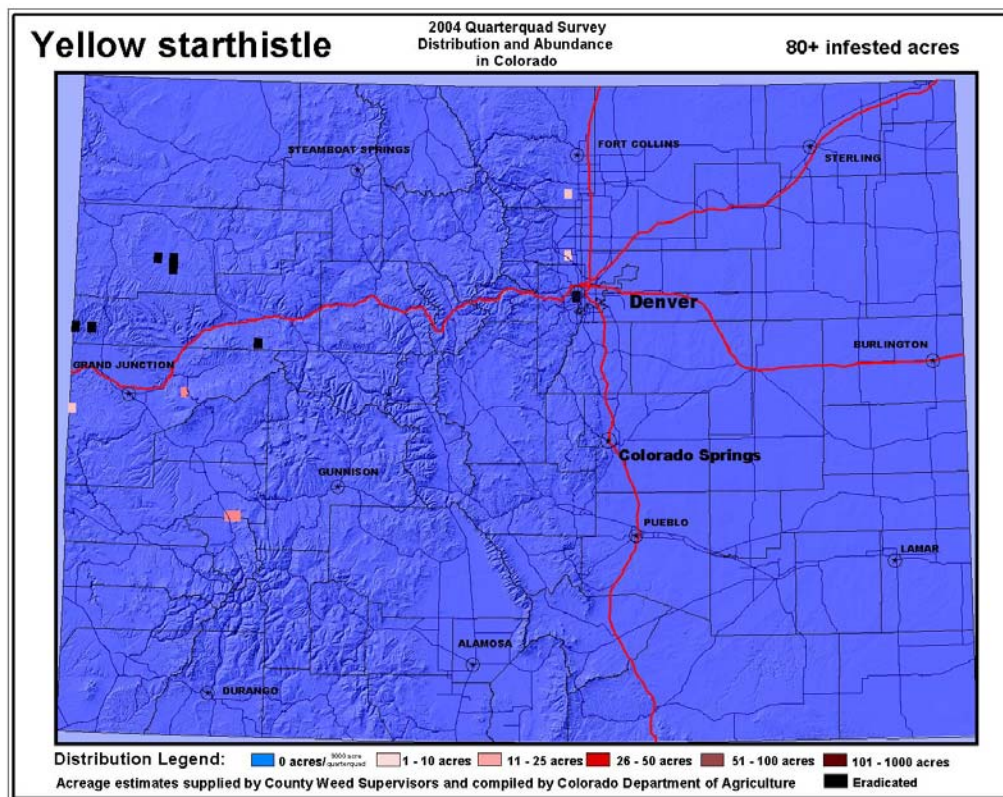
The Four Goals:

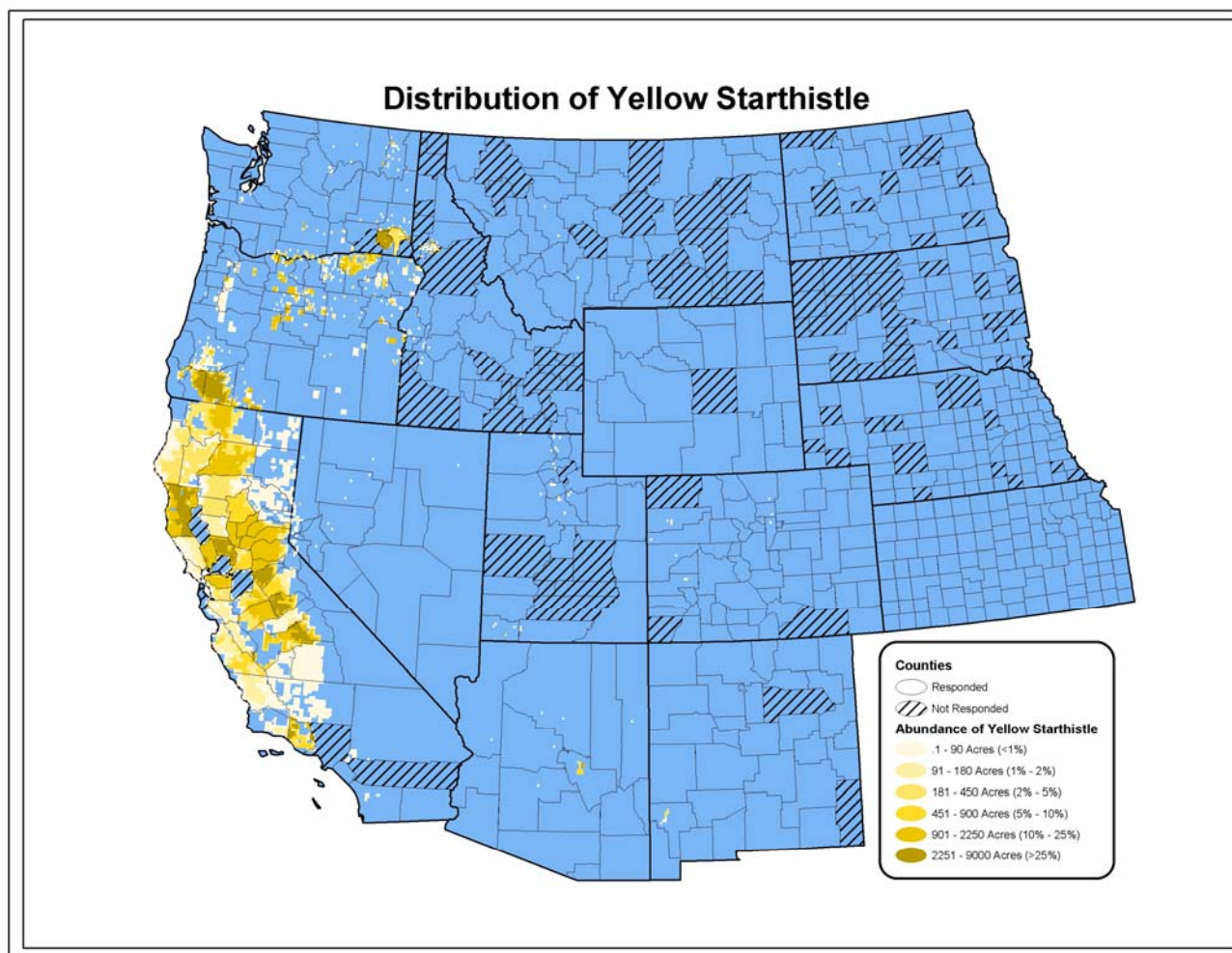
- Curtail the introduction of new noxious weed species into Colorado such as camelthorn, medusahead rye, purple starthistle, and lespedeza.
- Prevent the establishment of rare noxious weed species in Colorado such as yellow starthistle, Mediterranean sage, and dyer's woad.
- Stop the spread of noxious weed species that are already so well-established within Colorado that statewide eradication is no longer possible.
- Restore lands of exceptional agricultural and environmental value.

Colorado's strategic plan provides a framework to stop the spread of noxious weeds in Colorado and address their impacts on Colorado's environment and economy. Revisions to the Colorado Noxious Weed Act in 2003 give the Colorado Department of Agriculture the regulatory tools to implement this framework.

Restructured state weed list

- The purpose of Colorado's restructured state noxious weed list is to direct more coordinated efforts to manage noxious weeds in Colorado.
- It provides a framework for all jurisdictions to work toward common solutions for targeted species.
- State noxious weed list prescribes minimum statewide standards
- List A: rare noxious weeds that are subject to eradication wherever detected in Colorado
- State noxious weed list prescribes minimum statewide standards





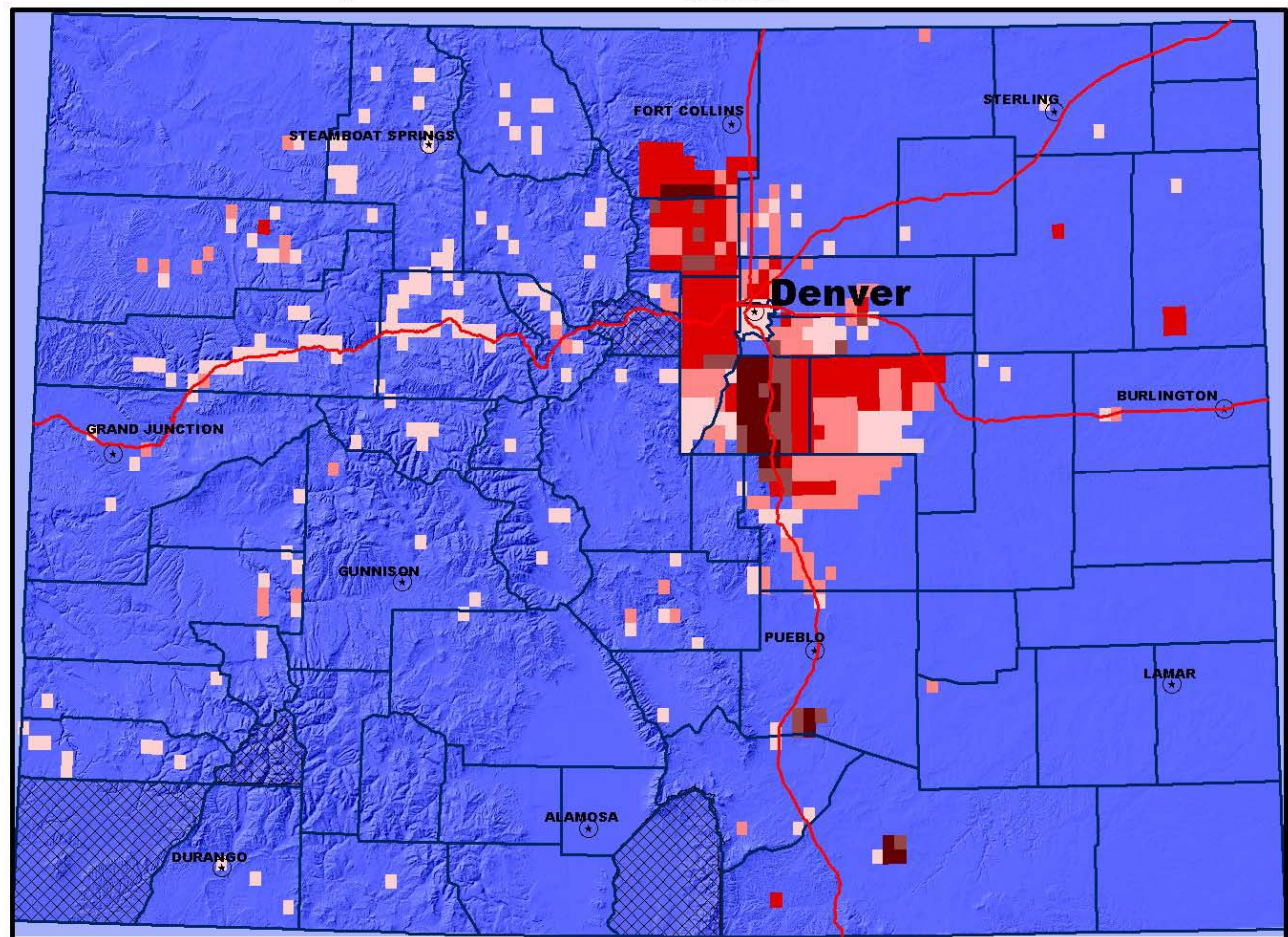
State noxious weed list prescribes minimum statewide standards

- List A: rare noxious weeds that are subject to eradication wherever detected in Colorado
- List B: weed species with discrete statewide distributions that are subject to eradication, containment, or suppression in order to stop their continued spread

Diffuse knapweed

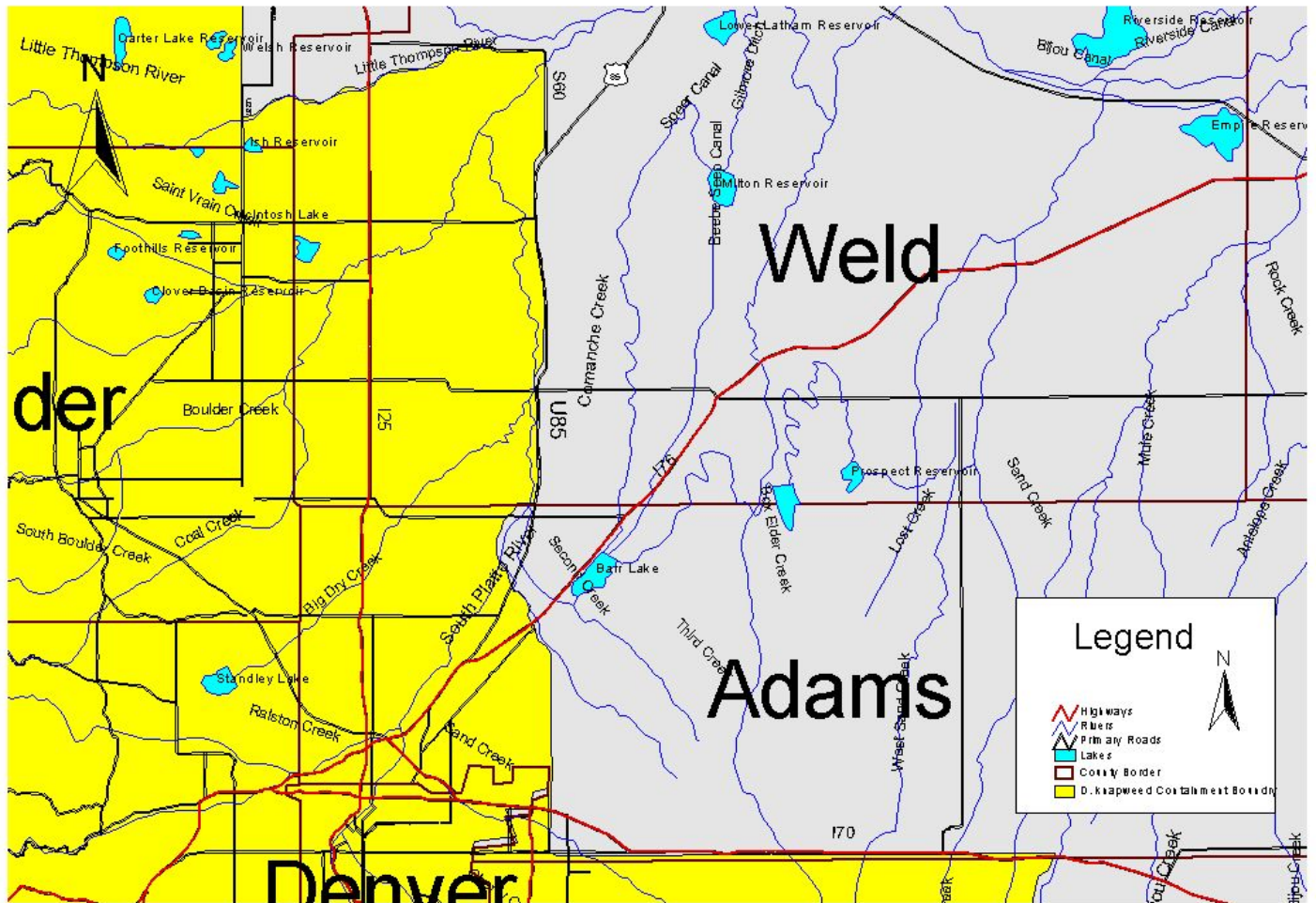
2005 Quarterquad Survey
Distribution and Abundance
in Colorado

138,443+ Infested Acres



Distribution Legend: 0 acres/9000 acre quarterquad 1 - 5 acres 6 - 50 acres 51 - 300 acres 301-1000 acres 1001 - 5000 acres
Acreage estimates supplied by County Weed Supervisors and Compiled by Colorado Department of Agriculture. Non - reporting

Front Range Diffuse Knapweed Containment



- State noxious weed list prescribes minimum statewide standards
 - A List: rare noxious weeds that are subject to eradication wherever detected in Colorado
 - B List: weed species with discrete statewide distributions that are subject to eradication, containment, or suppression in order to stop their continued spread
 - List C: widespread species with no state plan

Implementation

- All state noxious weeds reclassified into Lists A, B, and C
- Classifications based primarily upon:
 - Known distribution of designated species
 - Feasibility of current control technology to achieve specified management objectives
 - Costs of carrying out weed management plan statewide

Management

- Management plans enacted for all List A species
- Management plans enacted for some List B species such as absinth wormwood, Chinese clematis, plumeless thistle, spotted knapweed, and tamarisk (selected watersheds). New plans created for black henbane, diffuse knapweed, oxeye daisy, and yellow toadflax.

Information and references

- State noxious weed law, current weed list, and roster of state noxious weed advisory committee members are available under the noxious weed management program link at www.ag.state.co.us/csd/weeds/weedhome.html
- Contact Eric Lane by email at: eric.lane@ag.state.co.us

Comment: What significance is there in using the County weed lists?

Response: the lists provide a standard. We can move above the standard if it meets the definition of the Colorado law. The local county can take a stand on this.

Cindy Lair, Manager, State Conservation Board, Colorado Department of Agriculture, **also reported on the State Strategies and Coordination of the Invasive Plant Species Efforts**. Her initial plan was to help the Conservation Districts (CD) be more involved, active and include them in planning events regarding invasive weeds. To her pleasant surprise the CDs are currently involved, active and attending planning meetings. Invasive weeds is a critical issue that they are working on in their group meetings.

The State Conservation Board offers their assistance to the NRCS. We are grateful for the \$1 million in EQIP funding for this project. The county doesn't understand how NRCS works; this is a great opportunity for partnering and training. Please contact the CDs to get them involved in your projects and to partner with them. CDs are willing to work on getting more proposals. Several CDs currently have proposals in place.

Dennis Alexander, Assistant State Conservationist-Programs (ASTC-P) discussed the **Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)** program state priorities. The purpose of the CIG program is to stimulate development and adoption of innovative conservation approaches and technologies, leverage the federal investment in environmental enhancement and protection, in conjunction with agricultural production; and accelerate the transfer of promising innovations into NRCS technical guides and manuals.

This is a **two-tier** program. Tier one is national Competition – funding comes from EQIP, projects are managed by National Headquarters. Tier two is state competition – funding comes from participating States' EQIP allocations, projects are managed by NRCS State offices. We are reviewing only the State competition today. CIG funding availability is announced on NRCS website, (click here) [Conservation Innovation Grants-NRCS](#) and with the press released to partners. Applications are submitted to the NRCS State office. A review panel will convene to rank proposals using the evaluation criteria in the funding announcement. The NRCS ASTC-P certifies the ranking and ensures consistency with program objectives. The State Conservationist makes the final award decisions. The program focus of the CIG is not intended to fund “research” projects. CIG will fund projects targeting on-the-ground conservation, pilot projects and field demonstrations.

A point of emphasis is ensuring that CIG projects are truly innovative. Touchstone is the description of “innovative conservation projects or activities” in the funding announcement. Touchstone II is technologies and approaches eligible for EQIP – announcement language.

Project examples include: market-based environmental credit trading projects to address a natural resource concern, community-based approaches to regional natural resource concerns, demonstration of a proven technology in a new geographic area or agricultural sector and use of an existing technology or approach in a new way to help solve a natural resource concern.

To be eligible for the CIG program you must be a state or local units of government, Indian tribes, non-governmental organizations, for-profit companies or individuals.

Natural resource concerns for Fiscal Year 2006 include the six natural resources: 1) water resources, 2) soil resources, 3) atmospheric resources, 4) grazing land and forest health, 5) wildlife habitat at-risk species emphasis and 6) energy conservation and renewable energy sources. Projects that address multiple resource concerns will receive a higher ranking.

\$500,000 in funding is available in 2006. CIG will fund up to 50 percent of the cost of selected projects. A project may not receive more than \$75,000. Up to 50 percent of the applicant's match may be derived from in-kind contributions. There will be special provisions for Limited Resource and Beginning Farmers and Ranchers, and Tribes. Applicants from any of these groups may derive 75 percent of their matching funds from in-kind services. Funding awards for 2005 in Colorado in the amount of nearly \$720,000 was awarded to 12 projects. The smallest grant was for \$19,240 and the largest grant(s) was for \$75,000.

Announcement for program funding of the State competition in FY 2006 will be this week on the NRCS website, grants.gov (click here to access the site) and by direct mailing. **State proposals are due to the NRCS State office by 4:30pm on April 28, 2006.** The announcement for program funding of the national competition in FY 2006 was posted on grants.gov (click here) and the [NRCS website](http://www.nrcs.gov) on January 5, 2006. **National proposals are due in the national headquarters office by 5:00pm (EST) on March 20, 2006.** The components of the national competition are Natural Resource Concerns (\$10 million), Chesapeake Bay Watershed (\$5 million) and Technology (\$5 million).

Scott Richrath, Colorado Division of Water Resources, reported that the State Engineer Hal Simpson extends a thank you to Allen Green and his staff for meeting with Hal's staff to discuss State concerns regarding the EQIP sprinkler program. While we applaud NRCS and producers who seek to implement water-conserving practices, we need to continue to work together to ensure that improved practices do not result in increased consumptive use in violation of permits or compact, or in illegally expanded acres.

Comments: Who can we go to for assistance?

Response: Contact Brian Starkebaum or Eric Lane for assist or guidance on this program. NRCS is available for ideas only. If the program is successful the first year, the chances for extension of funding in the future is good.

Response: Sarah Braasch indicated the Chief, NRCS, is a support of this program. He appreciated that Colorado is taking the lead. We cannot speak for Congress and they will fund this program, but NRCS supports future funding of the program.

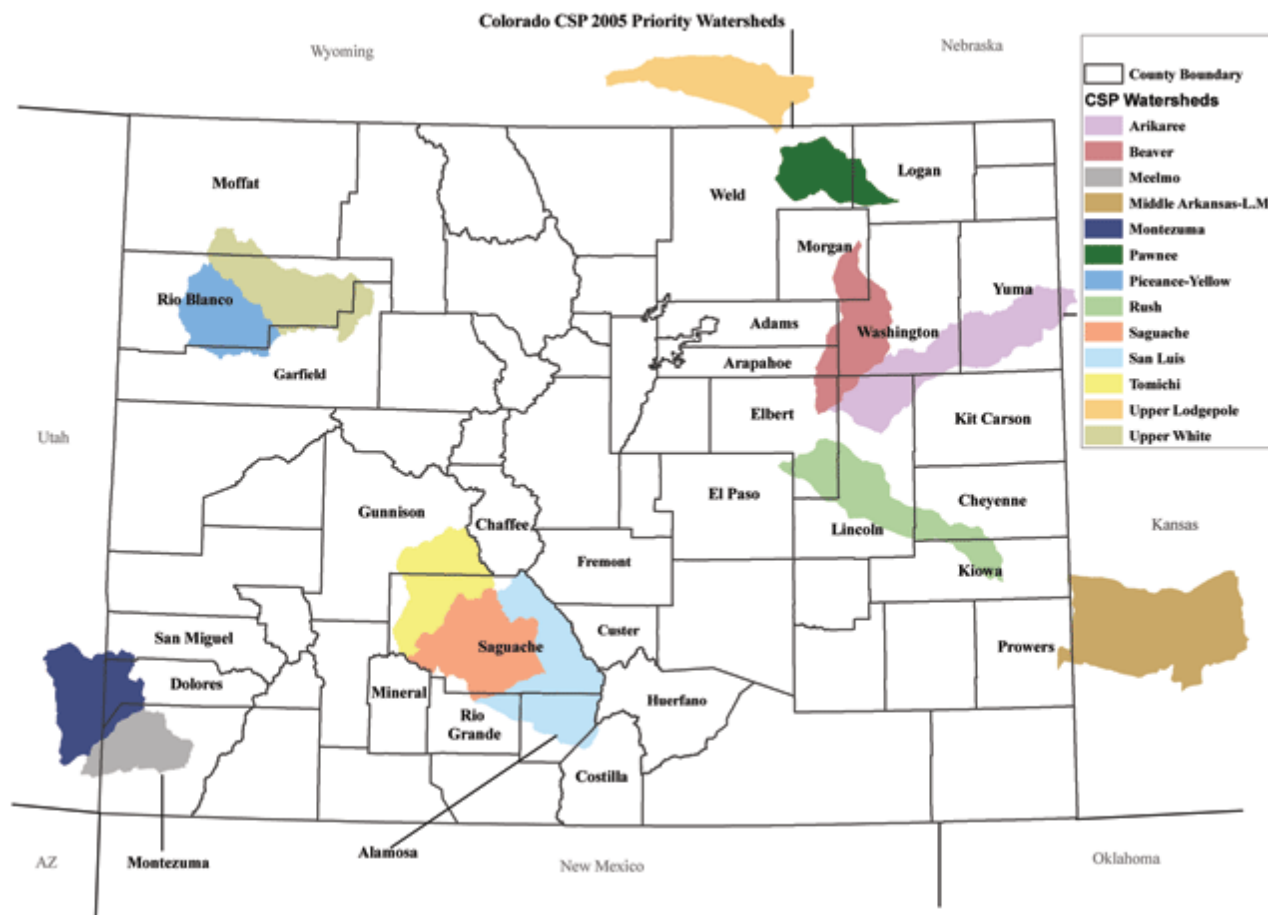
Dennis Alexander next discussed the **Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) geographic easement and payment caps**, the appraisal process and changes in the program. The WRP statute is that the value of the easement shall not exceed the fair market agricultural value of the land.

Prior to 2006, we asked appraisers to determine the "agricultural" value of the land. A recent Office of Inspector General (OIG) determination was that this appraisal process did not meet Federal Land Acquisition Standards. The completed appraisal was on the easement area only. Federal standards require an appraisal on the entire tract minus the value of the entire tract with easement area. Dennis showed an example of the WRP Perpetual easement. The entire property is 1,340 acres and the WRP easement is 620 acres.

To meet Land Acquisition Federal Standards and the WRP Statue, NRCS is adopting new appraisal standards plus establishing a state-wide easement value cap. Each state is to adopt a WRP easement value cap that reflects the agricultural value of lands being enrolled. Dennis showed another WRP Perpetual Easement map. The entire property is 136 acres, the Irrigated Meadow is 61 acres, and the Riparian is 75 acres.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) for Irrigated Cropland was \$2,350 per acre in 2005. NASS does not keep data on riparian/stream land uses. Comparables used by appraisers over the past two years, ranged from \$1,500 to \$6,000 per acre. The proposal is to utilize a \$2,350 per acre cap on the irrigated cropland value for WRP in 2006. If you have any additional comments you may contact Gary Finstad USDA-NRCS, 655 Parfet Street, Room E200C, Lakewood, CO 80215 or email at gary.finstad@co.usda.gov .

Allen Green next called on **Gary Finstad**, Programs Coordinator, NRCS to give a 2006 update on the **Conservation Security Program (CSP)** update.



In 2005 the sign-up summary in Colorado included 140 contracts (75% of eligible application; 7% of all applications); 283,129 acres were enrolled; and \$2.1 million (2005 payments). Tier I equals 29%, Tier II equals 30% and Tier III equals 41%.

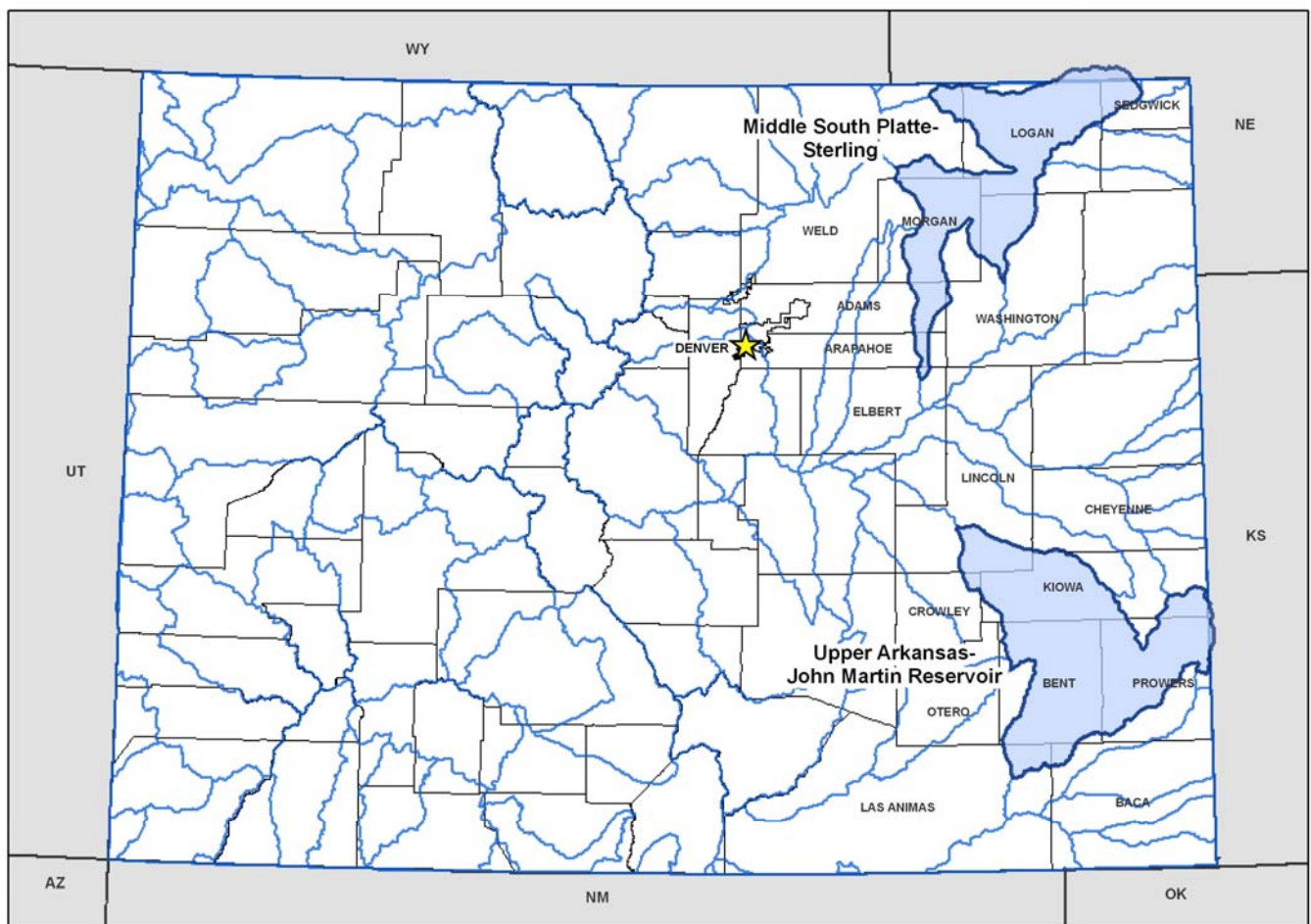
The 2005 Sign-up summary:

<u>Watershed</u>	<u>2005 Payments</u>
Beaver	\$766,874
Arikaree	\$740,748
Rush	\$157,289
Saguache	\$156,202
Pawnee	\$107,338
Upper White	\$ 50,398
San Luis	\$ 50,208
Montezuma	\$ 43,617
Tomichi	\$ 35,982
Mid. Ark-Lk. McKinney	\$ 8,381

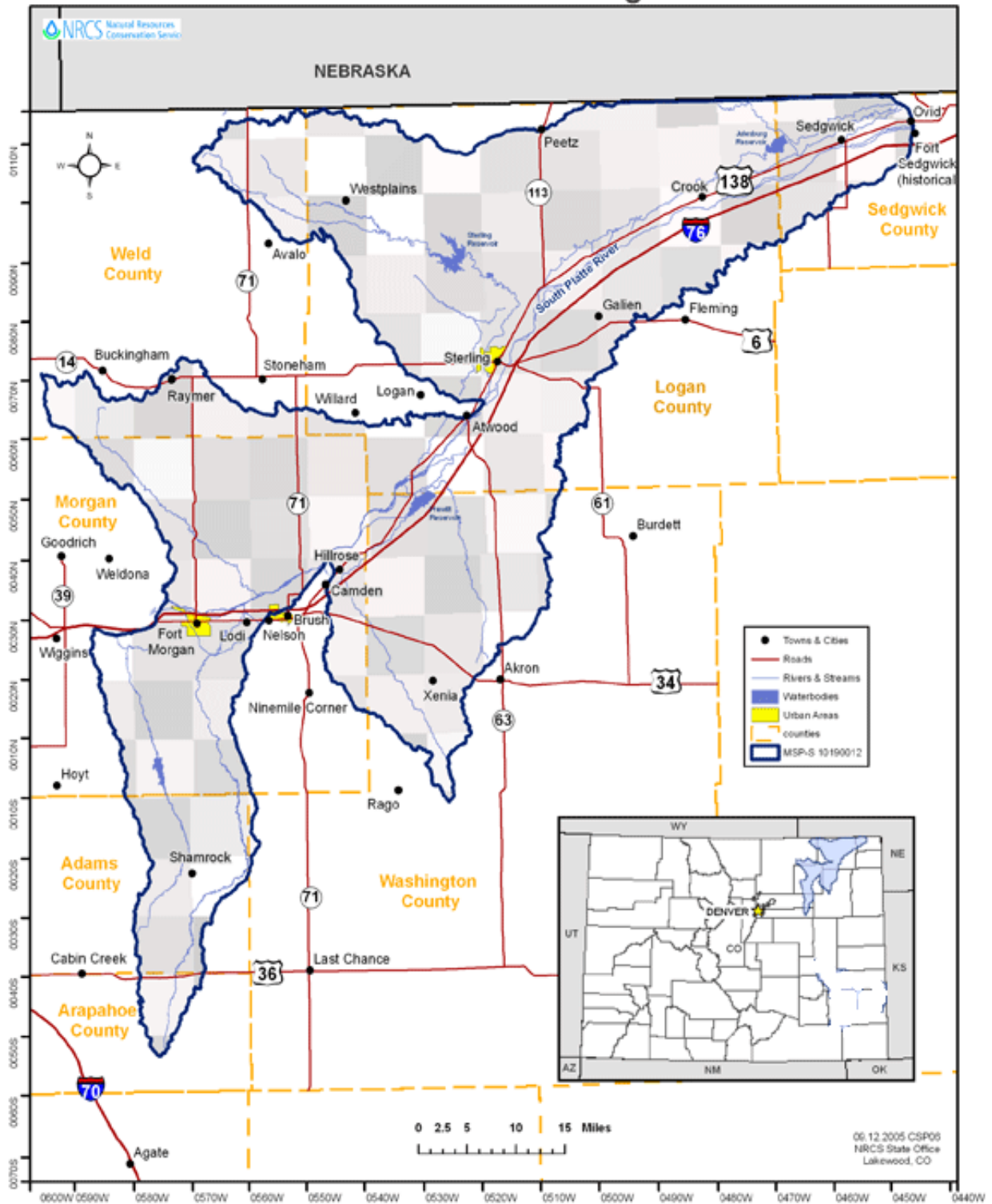
2005 Sign-up Summary

<u>County</u>	<u>Contracts</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>2005 \$</u>
Washington	43	99,093	\$667,002
Yuma	27	46,832	\$610,594
Morgan	11	11,160	\$162,201
Saguache	10	17,663	\$123,118
Rio Blanco	9	16,049	\$ 50,398
Elbert	7	7,806	\$ 78,696
Dolores	5	3,938	\$ 43,617
Rio Grande	4	2,511	\$ 60,884
Weld	4	8,977	\$ 42,930
Gunnison	4	1,404	\$ 33,713
Alamosa	4	1,869	\$ 24,667
Cheyenne	1	37,510	\$ 35,000

2006 Colorado Conservation Security Program



Middle South Platte-Sterling Watershed

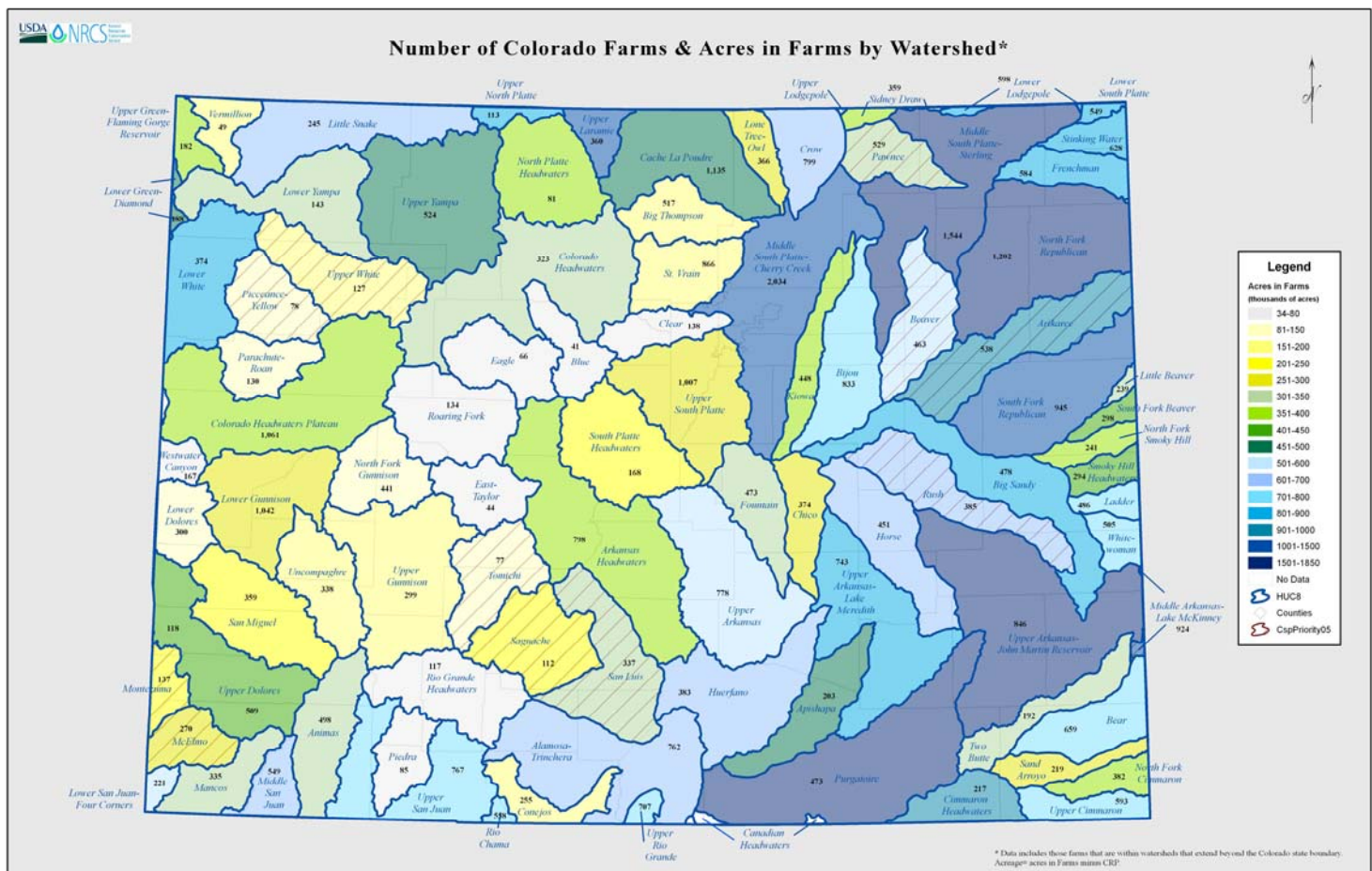


The 2006 Sign-up – “Middle South Platte-Sterling” is through March 31. 550 persons attended the workshops. Through Friday, March 3, 2006, 880 “office contacts” were made regarding the program; 142 self-assessment workbooks were submitted; and 216 applicant interviews were scheduled.

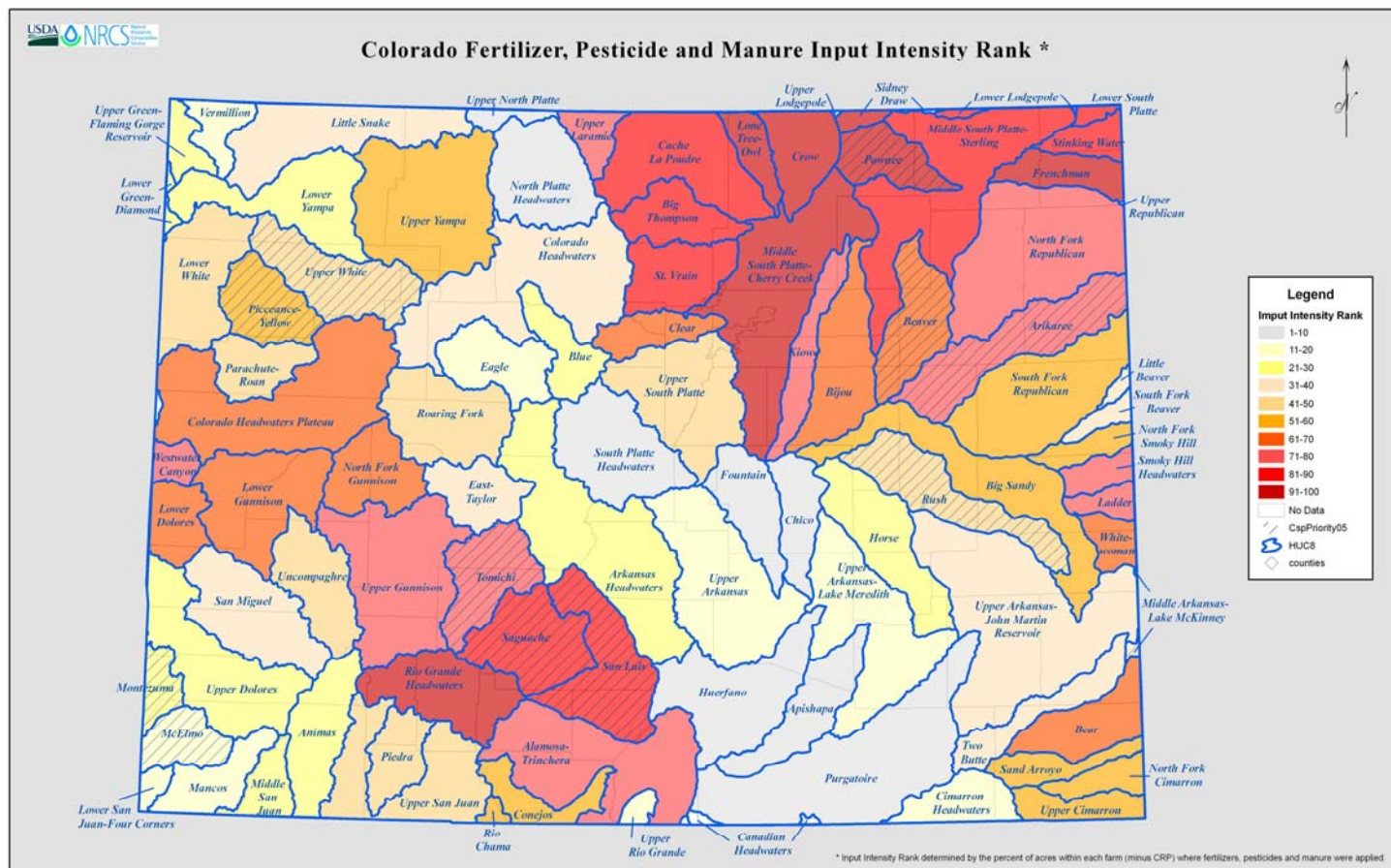
Considerations for the CSP watershed prioritization include:

- Number of farms & acres of farms in watersheds
- Percent private lands in watersheds
- Fertilizer input intensity *
- Pesticide input intensity *
- Manure input intensity *
- Amount of irrigated cropland

* Percent acres within each farm (minus CRP acres) where fertilizer, pesticides, and manure were applied

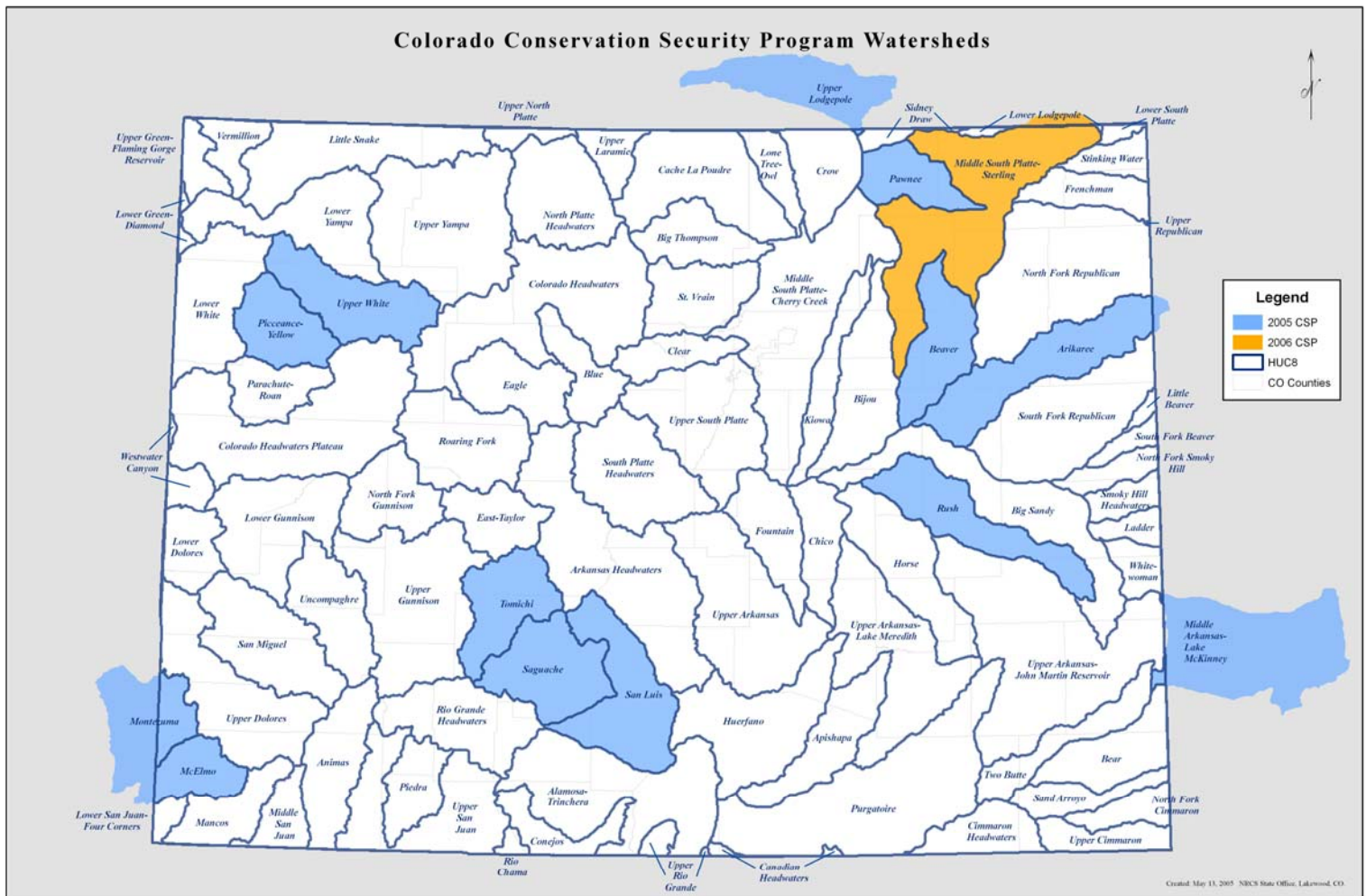






Data Source: HUC8 Watersheds - HUC8
 NASS Statistics
 Data Compiled by: USDA-NRCS Resources Inventory & Analysis Division staff, Grasslands Soil and Water Research Lab, Temple, TX 3/21/2005.

Map Created: May 23, 2005
 NRCS State Office, Lakewood, CO



Additional considerations for CSP watershed prioritization:

- Diversity of agricultural land uses
- Critical habitat for at-risk species
- Water quality
- Proximity to watersheds with previous sign-ups
- Projected FO staffing issues and competing workloads

Submit suggestions to: Gary Finstad, Colorado CSP Coordinator, phone: 720-544-2820 or email gary.finstad@co.usda.gov

After lunch, Allen Green called the meeting back to order. He reported that NRCS would be looking at what role we should play or can play with Energy Conservation and Renewable Energy. NRCS is putting together a new team to place strategies for energy conservation and the production of energy.

He called on **Jeff Burwell**, State Resource Conservationist, NRCS, to present information on the **Colorado NRCS Energy Initiative and Strategy**. The Vision for the Energy Initiative and Strategy is to have productive land and a healthy environment. The Mission is to help people help the land.

On-farm Energy use and Trends.

Approximately 30% of Ag production purchased costs are energy related:

Fuel \$10.2 billion; Electricity \$3.3 billion; Fertilizer and pesticide \$21.2 billion

Largest on-farm energy users are:

Irrigation; Tillage; Transportation; Inorganic fertilizers; Petroleum-based pesticides;

Buildings and motors; Grain drying; Plastics

Energy Prices increases and commodities

Oil prices more than doubled from 2002 to 2006

Nitrogen fertilizer prices this year

Economic factors and commodity prices

Colorado NRCS Strategy – The NRCS Strategic Plan will guide us in establishing goals, allocation of our resources and provide direction of the technical assistance and field assistance we provide to Colorado landowners.

Focus energy conservation, renewable energy sources and production of bio-fuels

Technical assistance, Financial assistance, Technology

Outreach activities, Cooperative conservation – partnerships

Incorporate energy conservation into our planning process – be aware of the enviro effects.

Promote adoption of practices linked to energy conservation

Residue management, Irrigation water management; Nutrient management, Pesticide management

Technical Assistance

On-farm energy audits; Energy estimators for tillage, water management, crop rotations

Alternate energy sources – solar, wind, geo-thermal, biomass

We will make the tools web-based.

Financial Assistance

CSP –enhancement payments

EQIP – cost-share new practices administrative practices

CIG grants that promote energy conservation and alternative energy sources

Financial assistance is available for 13 programs, including solar for livestock. 12 grants funded for

Bio Mass production through the CIG grant.

Technology – Renewable energy sources – solar and wind

Tools we currently have – training

What tools do we need – develop

Resource information – Division of Wildlife, Colorado Office of Energy Conservation

Web-based tools – assessable to all

Outreach

Fact sheets – environmental benefits, energy conservation – funding dollars;

Media; Workshops. We need to show how funding can be saved by changing the way they apply the practices.

Cooperative Conservation

How can we stretch our funding dollars and WHO can help?

RC&D – bio-fuels, economic development

Traditional partners – CDs, CACD, SCB, CSFS, CO DOA

New Partnerships – DOE, NREL

We need to develop markets for Bio-Mass resources. Work with the Department of Energy and Renewable Lab in Colorado. We need to look at energy as a component to conservation. Crops residues can produce energy. Need to look at crop rotation, negative effects, erosion, types of crops, alternate the crop rotation and water quality implications.

In Durango there is 30,000 acres in oil seed crops to produce diesel fuel. We encourage the involvement for production of energy bio fuel.

Comment (EPA): We could expand the use the energy star logo to producers of bio gas products. We need to get more resource on bio-energy information to the Field offices and the partners.

Comment: if you use the wrong crops in some areas, you will create conservation issues.

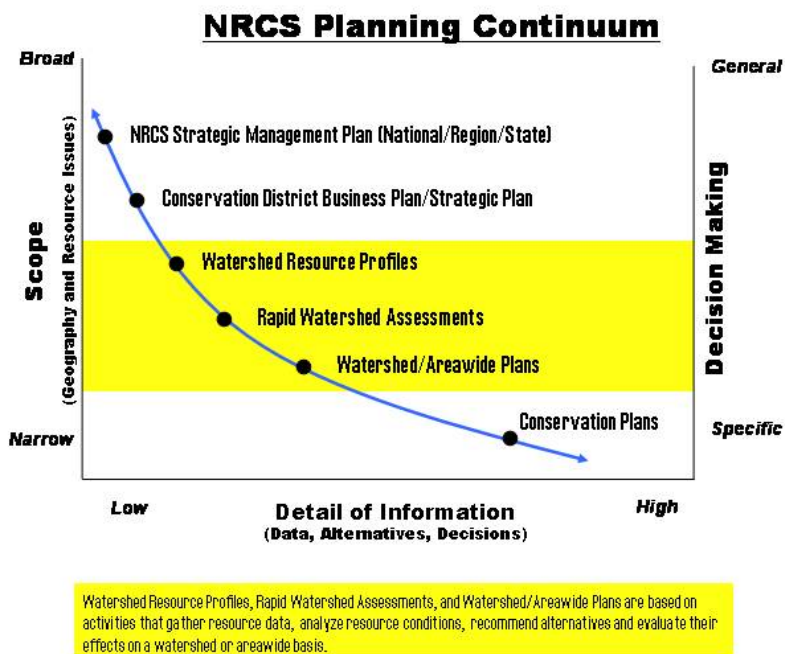
Comment: *The Intermountain Harvesting Conference, Laramie County, in Loveland, March 27-28* to address energy crop producing issues for partners in Colorado, New Mexico Utah, Nevada and Wyoming. We want to be ready for the federal grants.

For more information go to: www.harvestenergy.org .

Comment: there is concern of rangelands being used for energy crops. The economics will be the driver as to if lands are converted for energy crops. Rangeland is land for a reason, and it is not suitable for cropland.

Response: we need to focus on the market-based alternatives and be sure the proper resource assessments are done. The School of Mines is currently researching Bio Energy. NRCS will attend the Bio-Mass Conference in Denver next week to obtain more information. NRCS will work closely with partners to see what NRCS can do to promote energy conservation and n renewable energy. CSU offered their assistance and support for NRCS research efforts.

Frank Riggle, Assistant State Conservationist-Water Resources, NRCS, gave a report on the **Future of the Watershed Approach, Rapid Watershed Assessment (RWA) Plan**. The objectives of the plan is to gain an awareness for the overall future direction of the watershed approach, understand rapid watershed assessments and their role within the watershed approach and identify where “you” may be able to assist in successfully implementing rapid watershed assessments within the watershed approach. Frank explained what the RWA plan is.



Terms of the Rapid Watershed Assessment

Watershed Resource Profile is a descriptive set of data portraying the significant natural resource features of the watershed.

Rapid Watershed Assessment is an evaluation of watershed resources to determine the size, scope and the value of natural resource needs.

Resource Planning is the act of establishing goals, policies and solving natural resource problems.

Rapid Watershed Assessment versus the River Basin and PL-566 Planning

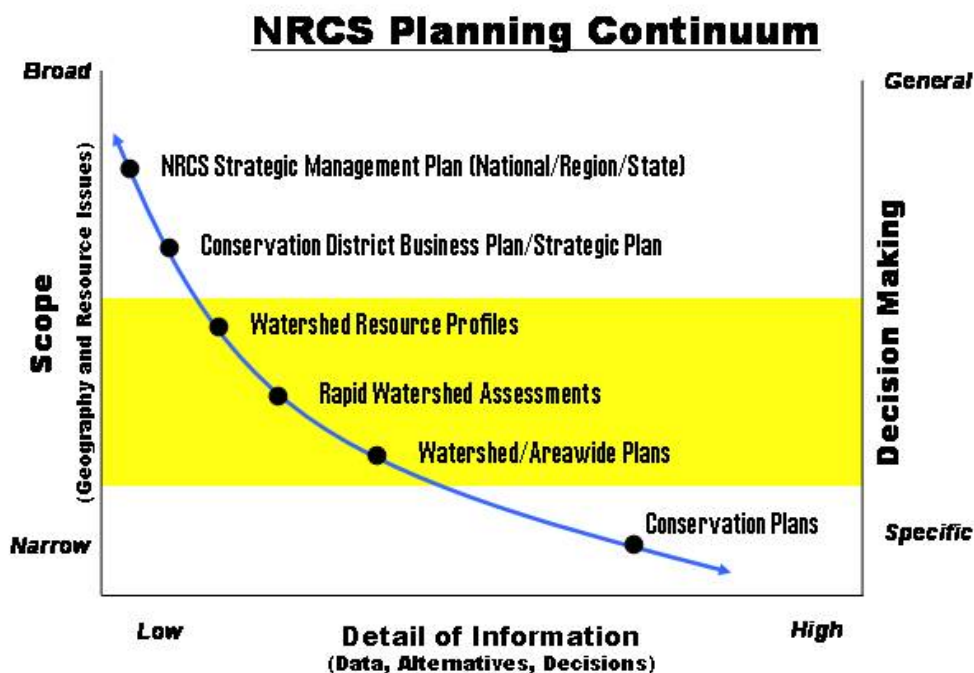
Rapid Watershed Assessment	River Basin PL-566 Planning
-Rapid	-Longer time to completion
-Flexible	-Bureaucratic
-Provides a platform for delivery of Farm Bill programs	-Must confirm to Principles and Guidelines for Federal funding
-Planning Intensity based on resource need	-Pre-determined level of planning intensity
-Follows routine Environmental Evaluation procedures, provides a platform for Environmental Assessment	-Requires Environmental Impact Statement

The benefits of the Watershed Approach and Rapid Watershed Assessment

- facilitates program integration
- provides transparency to our cooperators
- increased partner participation in planning
- provides a setting and context for adaptive management and monitoring
- provides useful information for all aspects of planning

The status of Rapid Watershed Assessments in Colorado

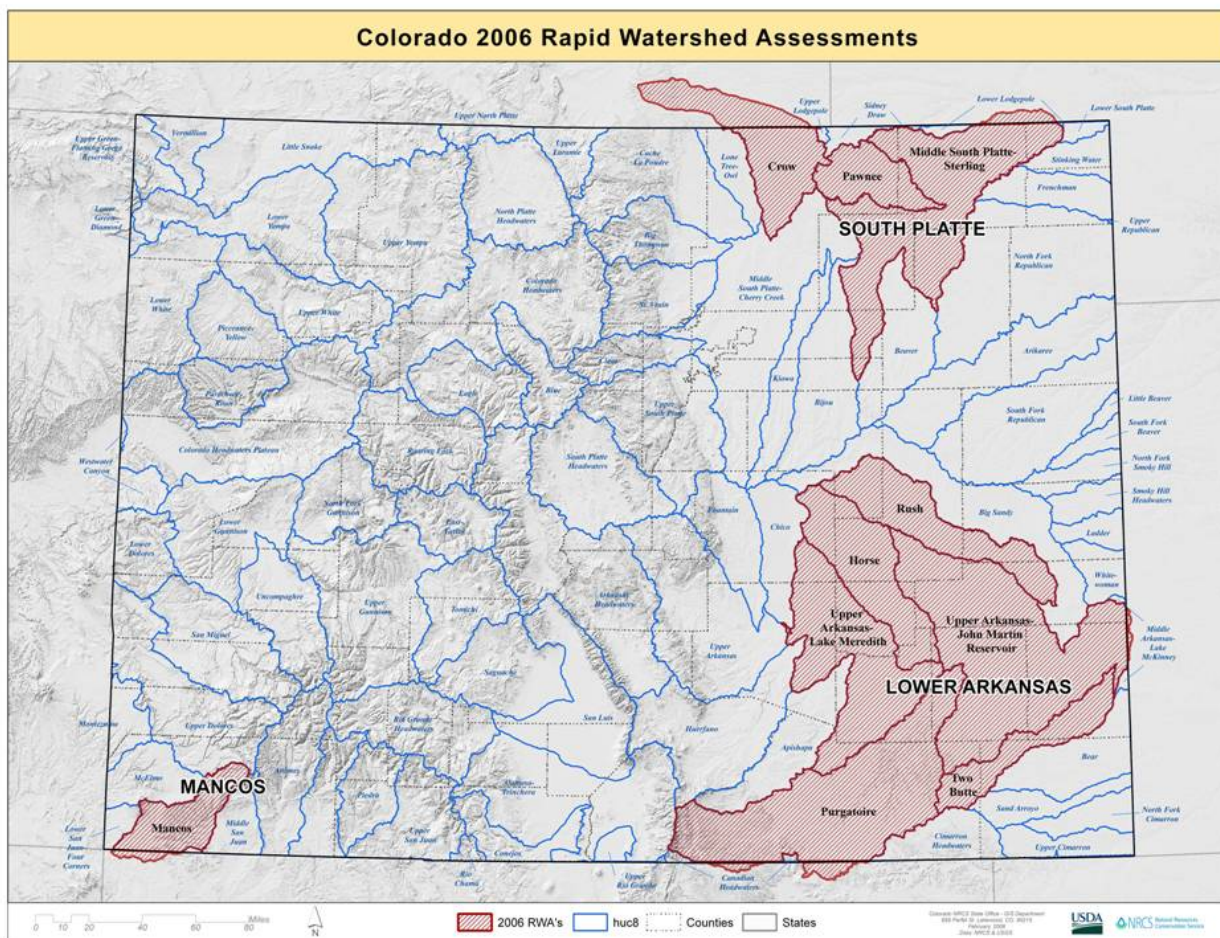
- basic profiles are complete for the ten “geo-political” watersheds
- currently transferring the existing data to 8-digit Hydraulic Unit Codes (HUC)



Watershed Resource Profiles, Rapid Watershed Assessments, and Watershed/Areawide Plans are based on activities that gather resource data, analyze resource conditions, recommend alternatives and evaluate their effects on a watershed or areawide basis.

The next steps will be to incorporate the Rapid Watershed Assessment into Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative; communicate the vision internally and externally; develop Rapid Watershed Assessment methodology and guidance for partners; initiate rapid watershed assessments in selected hydrologic units in the following watershed basins: Lower South Platte, Lower Arkansas and the San Juan-Mancos.

Potential RWA Areas:



Comments: Scott Richrath - of particular concern is the increased consumptive use that could result in violations of the Arkansas River Compact. As Allen indicated, a joint approach – such as that provided by the Rapid Watershed Assessments – will help prevent non-compliant practices throughout Colorado. I know that Steve Witte, our Division Engineer in Pueblo and Lorenz Sutherland of NRCS are cooperating on EQIP implementation in the Arkansas basin. All of our Division Engineers would be willing to review plans and estimated consumptive use or acre-expansion impacts as part of the NRCS approval process.

Response: Agency is focusing on the Lower Arkansas Watershed. There are several project plans with base information; this will give us a head start as the information is in place. Also obtain information from the CSP program data collection. We are looking for national funding.

Comment: Do all states have the opportunity to participate for the grants?

Response: Yes, the State Conservation Board.

Allen next called on **Randy Loutzenhiser**, Past President, CACD, who presented a proposal on the **Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) for the Republican River Watershed**, proposed by Flagler

Conservation District. This is a three-year program. The theory is that a 12,000 Acre Program be divided into 4,000 acre blocks. Each year for the three-year period 4,000 acres of qualified irrigated land will be idled for irrigated purposes only. Acreage can either be devoted to dryland production or summer fallow in a conserving use method, 4,000 acres will be devoted to water conserving crop use (i.e. wheat), and 4,000 acres devoted to oil-based (for Bio-Diesel Production) water conserving crop use.

The program participants will rotate the use of their irrigated land in the following order to establish an equal number of acres and rotational program:

Three- year 12,000 Acre Program

4,000 acre Block:

Year 1 – Irrigation well Idled – Service Disconnected

Acreage devoted to dry-land cropping or fallow

Acreage will be removed from Tax Roll;

Utility Facility Charge removed for the year

\$80.00 acre Payment received (\$40.00 grant & \$40 RRW)

Year 2 – Irrigation well service restored

Acreage devoted to Water Conserving Use Crop

Irrigated tax base restored; Utility Facility Charge restored

Year 3 – Irrigated status remains intact

Acreage devoted oil based Water Conserving Use Crop

4,000 acre Block:

Year 1 – Irrigated status remains intact

Acreage devoted to Water Conserving Use Crop

Year 2 – Irrigated status remains intact

Acreage devoted to oil based Water Conserving Use Crop

Year 3 – Irrigation well Idled – Service Disconnected

Acreage devoted to dry-land cropping or fallow

Acreage will be removed from tax roll for one year

Utility Facility Charge removed for the year

\$80.00 acre Payment received (\$40.00 grant & \$40 RRW)

4,000 acre Block:

Year 1 – Irrigated status remains intact

Acreage devoted to oil based Water Conserving Use Crop

Year 2 – Irrigation well Idled – Service Disconnected

Acreage devoted to dry-land cropping or fallow

Acreage will be removed from tax roll for one year

Utility Facility Charge removed for the year

\$80.00 acre Payment received (\$40.00 grant & \$40 RRW)

Year 3 – Irrigation well service restored

Acreage devoted to Water Conserving Use Crop

Irrigated tax base restored

Utility Facility Charge restored

For a three-year period, on a rotational basis, 4,000 acres will serve to meet compact demands and be devoted to the Republican River Compact model, although the location of the acres change on an annual basis. At the same time, 4,000 acres will serve to implement a water conservation approach to irrigating, thus utilizing less water from the aquifer. Finally, another 4,000 acres would be devoted to oil-based water conserving use crop for Bio Diesel production. Examples: See Calculations as prepared on Excel (attached).

- Using the rotational balance of 4,000 acres devoted to irrigation idling, 4,000 acres devoted to conserving use crop (wheat) and 4,000 acres devoted corn, an annual water saving would calculate

to 7,243 acre feet. This example is utilized to illustrate the water that would be used under a corn production rotation in comparison to the following two examples as designed by the program.

- Using the rotational balance of the 4,000 acres devoted to irrigation idling, 4,000 acres devoted to conserving use crop (oil based) and 4,000 acres devoted to millet an annual water saving would calculate to 10,910 acre feet.
- Using the rotation balance of 4,000 acres devoted to irrigation idling, 4,000 acres devoted to a conserving use crop (oil based) and 4,000 acres devoted to millet an annual water saving would calculate to 9,850 acre feet.

In the three examples, 4,000 acres of irrigation idling would be given calculation to the Republican River Compact Administration Ground Water Model on an annual basis.

All acres will be devoted to a no-till or strip-till cropping scheme, with a water management plan, nutrient management plan and Pest Management plan.

Proposed Partners to Program:

Republican River Watershed Association – Program Administrator
Republican River Water Conservation District – Program Administrator & Funding
Natural Resources Conservation Service – Program Oversight & Funding
Kit Carson County Assessors Office – Annual Tax Roll, Irrigated Lands
Utilities – Elimination of Facility Charge in Year of Idling & Annual Disconnect
Merchandising Businesses – Cooperatives, Blue Sun Bio-Diesel, Bird Seed – Contracts
Agronomists or District Employees – Soil Test, Nutrient, Pest, & Water Management
CSU Cooperative Extensions – Conserving Water Use Crop Recommendations

State of Colorado: Department of Agriculture – State Conservation Board, Ground Water Management Program; Department of Natural Resources – State Engineers Office, obligations to RR compact, Water Conservation Board, Funding Conservation Implementation.

Mike Petersen – Strip-Till knowledge

Project Abstract:

- A. CIG component – Natural Resource Concern – Ogallala Aquifer
- B. Project Title –
- C. Project Duration – January 1, 2007 – December 31, 2009
- D. Director Information
- E. Names & affiliations of project collaborators; Attached
- F. Est. # of EQIP eligible producers involved in the project
- G. Natural Resource Concerns – Reduction in Pumping of Ogallala
- H. List of Deliverables/products
- I. Summary of work to be preformed
- J. Total Project Cost
- K. Total Federal Funds Requested - \$500,000.00

Comments: The irrigated tax could be reduced for that year of rotation. Producers become award when taxes applied need, now they would need to be more proactive and let assessors know what is happening on their land. The sponsoring agency partners would need to work with the watershed or CD. The helps keep the gross funding flowing through the community.

Comment: if we don't meet the compact regulations, we could lose the water. This could affect the entire state. This could be used for the entire state of Colorado.

Comment: The Republican Watershed is holding a meeting March 15, 2006; please bring this proposal to our meeting.

Project Description

Conservation Innovation Grant (CIG) for the Republican River Watershed

Proposed by the Flagler Conservation District.

Corn Production	26	Oil based - excluding soybeans or Wheat Production	18.99		
Effective Precipitation	11.28	Effective Precipitation	11.28		
Supplemental Water	14.72	Supplemental Water	7.71	Savings	7.01
Acre Ft.	1.227		0.643		0.584
Corn Production	26	Millet	15		
Effective Precipitation	11.28	Effective Precipitation	11.28		
Supplemental Water	14.72	Supplemental Water	3.72	Savings	11
Acre Ft.	1.227		0.310		0.917
<u>4000 Acre Block Irrigation Well Idled</u>					
Water Saved	4906.667	= 1.227x4000			
4000 Acre Conserving Use – Wheat					
Water Saved	2336.667	= .584x4000		Corn Example in rotation	
4000 Acre Corn Production					
Water Saved	0				
Total Water Savings	7243.333	Acre Feet			
<u>4000 Acre Block Irrigation Well Idled</u>					
Water Saved	4906.667	= 1.227x4000			
<u>or 4000 Acre Block Conserving Use - Wheat Oil based</u>					
Water Saved	2336.667	= .584x4000		Millet Example	
<u>or 4000 Acre Block Conserving Use - Millet</u>					
Water Saved	3666.667	= .917x4000			
Total Water Savings	10910.000	Acre Feet			
<u>or 4000 Acre Block Irrigation Well Idled</u>					
Water Saved	4906.667	= 1.227x4000			
4000 Acre Block Conserving Use - Wheat Oil based					
Water Saved	2336.67	= .584x4000			
4000 Acre Block Conserving Use - Millet Wheat					
Water Saved	2336.667	= .584x4000		Wheat Example	
Total Water Savings	9580.004	Acre Feet			

Allen called for any comments, questions or announcements from the State Technical Committee.

Scott Richrath, Colorado Division of Water Resources, reported that the Republican River Water Conservation District will host a Technical Information Workshop **Saturday, March 18 at 10 AM in Wray** at the Wray Ambulance Facility. Representatives from the District, the State Engineer's Office, and the compact model development team will be on hand to answer questions from the public.

Tammy VerCauteren invited with the State Technical Committee to attend The Flagler Conservation District, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife Landowner Meeting on the ***COLORADO BIRDING TRAIL, HABITAT ENHANCEMENT STRATEGIES, and ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR LANDOWNERS AND COMMUNITIES***. **Where:** Flagler School **When:** Tuesday, April 11th, 5 – 8 p.m. **Cost:** \$0. Dinner will be provided. **Who:** All interested landowners, residents, business owners.

What is the Birding Trail? The Colorado Birding Trail is a major ecotourism initiative by the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Audubon Colorado, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, and Colorado Field Ornithologists to promote wildlife recreation, conservation of natural resources by private landowners, and a diversified income for rural economies. The Birding Trail is a set of driving routes that will link outdoor recreation sites, both public and private, into a network of places where visitors can observe birds and other wildlife, often in addition to archaeological and paleontological treasures. The Trail will offer free promotion to selected sites and communities that feature access to these resources. The Birding Trail will be launched in eastern Colorado in the fall of 2006, and will consist of an integrated website with digital trail maps, detailed descriptions of Birding Trail sites, and suggested travel routes. We will also provide printed maps to involved communities for distribution to tourists.

How does a private site get included? Ideally, we are looking for sites that have one or more of the following: unique species, unique habitats, large seasonal concentrations of wildlife, a nice representation of a particular habitat, playa lakes or permanent surface water, dinosaur tracks, petroglyphs, and/or lodging opportunities. To nominate any site, come to one the meeting in Flagler on April 11th, or contact Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory by email (Seth.Gallagher@rmbo.org) or phone (970-482-1707).

What's in it for the landowner and the community? The Birding Trail offers a chance to:

- diversify rural economies;
- showcase excellent land stewardship on the part of private landowners;
- promote conservation;
- educate the general public about the importance of agriculture and private lands.

If you are interested in broadening your economic base through wildlife watching or other ecotourism opportunities, the Flagler meeting is for you. The meeting will introduce landowners to the nuts and bolts of Birding Trail participation, the economics of wildlife viewing and ecotourism, conservation partnership opportunities, and funding available for habitat enhancement.

How and why should you enhance the habitat on your property? Many cost-sharing programs exist to help landowners to enhance and conserve habitat on their property at little or no cost to them. This benefits Colorado's native wildlife as well as improving cattle grazing and agricultural practices. We try to create win-win situations between landowners and wildlife throughout the eastern plains. Part of our meeting will be devoted to sharing information with landowners about these programs.

Everyone is welcome to attend the **Prairie and Wetlands Focus Area Meeting**, March 27, 2006, 11:00am to 4:00pm. A lunch will be provided with a roundtable discussion during lunch.

Location: Otero Junior College, La Junta, Colorado, in the Banquet Room.

RSVP for the Flagler Meeting by Monday, April 10th to Dana Ripper at dana.ripper@rmbo.org or 970-482-1707.

Discussion topics will include an update on Tackling Tamarisk on the Purgatorie, update on the Arkansas Darter WHIP, discussion on EQIP Basics: how the program works; How the program is currently being utilized; the Future of wildlife EQIP; and a Discussion: What should a good shortgrass prairie wildlife EQIP project look like and how can we achieve this? The Status of CRP in eastern Colorado (contract terminations, re-enrollments, extensions); CREP; New general CRP sign-up; Status of continuous CRP (23a,33); CRP and Wildlife workshop in August. Followed by a presentation on the Great Plains Fishes.

The Flagler Conservation District, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, and the Colorado Division of Wildlife present: **A Landowner Meeting on the *Colorado Birding Trail*, Habitat Enhancement Strategies, and Economic Opportunities For Landowners and Communities**

Where: Flagler School When: Tuesday, April 11th, 5 – 8 p.m. Cost: \$0. Dinner will be provided.

Who: All interested landowners, residents, business owners.

Please RSVP to Seth or Dana at RMBO 970-482-1707 or seth.gallagher@rmbo.org

Scott Richrath, Colorado Division of Water Resources, “reported that the Republican River Water Conservation District will host a Technical Information Workshop Saturday, March 18 at 10 AM in Wray at the Wray Ambulance Facility. Representatives from the District, the State Engineer’s Office, and the compact model development team will be on hand to answer questions from the public.”

Debbie F. Slobe, Communications Team Leader, Playa Lakes Joint Venture reported

“The Playa Lakes Joint Venture (PLJV – www.pljv.org) has recently launched a weekly radio show on High Plains Public Radio called “Playa Country”. HPPR broadcasts throughout a 5-state region, including southeast Colorado where it can be heard on 90.7 in Lamar. Playa Country features the people, partnerships, projects and programs that are making a difference in the conservation of wildlife habitat on working land and includes interviews with landowners, resource managers, conservationists and community leaders. The show airs two times each week on Mondays at 9:30am and again Sat at 10:15am MST. The PLJV is seeking story ideas from around the region. Send your ideas to PLJV Communications Team Leader Debbie Slobe at Debbie.slobe@pljv.org. To listen to this week’s show, visit: <http://www.pljv.org/radio.html> and to listen to archives of past programs, visit: <http://www.hppr.org/features/playa.html>”

Allen next announced that Dennis Alexander has just accepted the position of State Conservationist in New Mexico. He extended his congratulations and best wishes to Dennis.

The Colorado Division of Water Resources extended congratulations to Dennis Alexander on his appointment to New Mexico State Conservationist. We’ve greatly enjoyed working with Dennis and wish him all the success in his new endeavor.

There being no further business, Allen thanked Sarah Braasch for being with us for this meeting and then extended a thank you to the State Technical Committee members for their attendance and input. He adjourned the meeting at 3:00pm.

Attendees

State Technical Committee Meeting - March 8, 2006

Last name	First name	Organization
Alexander	Dennis	NRCS
Bornstein	Jacob	Colorado Watershed Network
Braasch	Sarah	NRCS
Briggs	Shane	CO Division of Wildlife
Burnidge	William	TNC
Burwell	Jeffery	NRCS
Coryell	Dennis	Republican River Water CD
Davey	Pat	NRCS
Davis	Tim	CO Division of Wildlife
DiFeo	Lynette	Farm Service Agency
Ernst	Harley	Cope CD
Finstad	Gary	NRCS
Fisher	Laurie	CDPHE
Frank	Lewis	FSA
Gallagher	Seth	Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
Gonzales	Dollie	NRCS
Green	Allen	NRCS
Grett	Tom	Shavano CD
Hackett	Jan	Colorado State Forest Service
Hendrickson	Callie	CACD
Holley	Kathy	US Bureau of Reclamation
Johnson	Dr. Marc	Colorado State University
Kernohan	Greg	Ducks Unlimited
King	Pam	Colorado State Conservation Board
Koch	Jared	Colorado Farm Bureau
Lair	Cindy	Colorado State Conservation Board
Lane	Eric	Colorado Department of Agriculture
Larson	John	EPA, Region 8
Liss	Mary Sue	Colorado Conservation Board
Loutzenhiser	Randy	CACD
Lucero	Ted	NRCS
Meaker	Randy	Producer
Miller	Steve	Colorado Water Conservation Board
Neel	Linda	NRCS, Recording Secretary
Paulter	Tom	Republican River Water CD
Pereault	Peg	EPA, Region 8
Rasmussen	Donna	NRCS
Rave	Beverly	Colorado State Land Board
Rettig	Mel	Colorado State Conservation Board
Richrath	Scott	Department Water Resources
Roath	Dr. Roy	Colorado State University, Range
Slobe	Debbie	Playa Lakes Joint Venture
Smith	Nancy	The Nature Conservancy
Starkebaum	Brian	Haxton and Yuma CD
Sundstrom	Greg	Colorado State Forest Service
Toombs	Ted	Environmental Defense
Ulfelder	Bill	TNC
Ver Cauteren	Tammy	Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory
Warner	Bob	CACD, Upper South Platte Watershed
Wright	J.D.	CACD